## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for treating pain comprising administering to a subject in need of pain relief a medicinal ointment comprising 1% to 90% by weight an active kavalactone selected from the group consisting of dihydrokawain, dihydromethysticin, kawain, and a combination thereof; and a medicinally acceptable carrier.

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- 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydrokawain.
- 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydromethysticin.
- 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the active kavalactone is a combination of dihydromethysticin, dihydrokawain, and kawain.
- 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the ointment comprises 1.5% to 30% by weight an active kavalactone selected from the group consisting of dihydrokawain, dihydromethysticin, kawain, and a combination thereof; and a medicinally acceptable carrier.
- 6. The method of claim 5, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydrokawain.

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- 7. The method of claim 5, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydromethysticin.
- 8. The method of claim 5, wherein the active kavalactone is a combination of dihydromethysticin, dihydrokawain, and kawain.
- 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the ointment comprises 2% to 25% by weight an active kavalactone selected from the group consisting of dihydrokawain, dihydromethysticin, kawain, and a combination thereof; and a medicinally acceptable carrier.
- 10. The method of claim 9, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydrokawain.
- 30 11. The method of claim 9 wherein the active kavalactone is dihydromethysticin.

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- 12. The method of claim 9, wherein the active kavalactone is a combination of dihydromethysticin, dihydrokawain, and kawain.
- 13. A method for treating pain comprising administering to a subject in need of pain relief a 5 patch comprising a material layer and a composition associated with the material layer; the composition having 1% to 90% by weight an active kavalactone selected from the group consisting of dihydrokawain, dihydromethysticin, kawain, and a combination thereof, associated with the material layer.
  - 14. The method of claim 13, further comprising a protective layer intimately adhered to one side of the material layer which is resistant to passage of the active kavalactone.
  - 15. The method of claim 14, wherein the material layer includes a pressure-sensitive adhesive.
  - 16. The method of claim 15, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydrokawain.

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- 17. The method of claim 15, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydromethysticin.
- 18. The method of claim 15, wherein the active kavalactone is a combination of dihydromethysticin, dihydrokawain, and kawain.

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- 19. The method h of claim 15, wherein the adhesive layer includes 1.5% to 30% by weight an active kavalactone selected from the group consisting of dihydrokawain, dihydromethysticin, kawain, and a combination thereof; and a medicinally acceptable carrier.
- 20. The method of claim 19, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydrokawain.
- 21. The method of claim 19, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydromethysticin.

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- 22. The method of claim 19, wherein the active kavalactone is a combination of dihydromethysticin, dihydrokawain, and kawain.
- 23. The method of claim 15, wherein the adhesive layer includes 2% to 25% by weight an 5 active kavalactone selected from the group consisting of dihydrokawain, dihydromethysticin, kawain, and a combination thereof; and a medicinally acceptable carrier.
- 24. The method h)of claim 23, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydrokawain. 10

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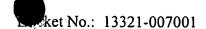
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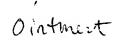
- 25. The method of claim 23, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydromethysticin.
- 26. The method of claim 23, wherein the active kavalactone is a combination of dihydromethysticin, dihydrokawain, and kawain.
- 27. The method of for treating pain comprising administering to a subject in need of pain relief a medicinal ointment comprising 1% to 90% by weight an active kavalactone selected from the group consisting of desmethoxyyangonin, dihydrokawain, dihydromethysticin, kawain, methysticin, and yangonin, and a combination thereof; and a medicinally acceptable carrier.
- 28. The method of claim 1, wherein the pain is myofascial pain.
- 29. The method of claim 1, wherein the pain is hyperalgesia.

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- 30. The method of claim 1, wherein the pain is preemptive analgesia.
- 31. The method of claim 1, wherein the pain is osteoarthritis pain.



- 32. The method of claim 1, wherein the pain is inflammatory pain.
- 33. The method of claim 1, wherein the pain is neuropathic pain



- 34. The method of claim 1, wherein the medicinal ointment further comprises petrolatum, beeswax, vegetable oil, or combination thereof.
- 35. The method of claim 1, wherein the medicinal ointment is essentially devoid of paraaminobenzoic acid.